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A Caution.

Love hailed a little maid
Romping through the meadow;
Heedless in the sun she played,
Scornful of the shadow.
"Come with me," whispered he;
"Listen, sweet, to love and reason."
"By-and-by," she mocked reply,
"Love's not in season."

Years went, years came,
Light mixed with shadow,
Love met the maid again
Dreaming through the meadow.
"Be not coy," urged the boy,
"List in time to love and reason.
"By-and-by," she mused reply,
"Love's still in season."

Years went, years came,
Light turned to shadow;
Love saw the maid again,
Waiting in the meadow.
"Pass no more, my dream is o'er;
I can listen now to reason."
"Keep thee coy," mocked the boy;
"Love's out of season."

The Organ-Blower.

Devoutest of my Sunday friends,
The patient organ-blower bends;
I see his figure sink and rise,
(Forgive me, Heaven, my wandering eyes!)
A moment lost, the next half seen,
His head above the scanty screen,
Still measuring out his deep salaams
Through quavering hymns and panting psalms.

No priest that prays in gilded stole,
To save a rich man's mortgaged soul;
No sister, fresh from holy vows,
So humbly stoops, so meekly bows;
His large obeisance put to shame
The proudest genuflecting dame,
Whose Easter bonnet low descends
With all the grace devotion lends.

O brother! with the supple spine,
How much we owe those bows of thine!
Without thine arm to lend the breeze,
How vain the finger on the keys!
Though all unmatched the player's skill,
Those thousand throats were dumb and still;
Another's art may shape the tone,
The breath that fills it is thine own.

Six days the silent Memnon waits
Behind his temple's folded gates;
But when the seventh day's sunshine falls
Through rainbowed windows on the walls,
He breathes, he sings, he shouts, he fills
The quivering air with rapturous thrills;
The roof resounds, the pillars shake,
And all the slumbering echoes wake!

The Preacher from the Bible-text
With weary words my soul has vexed;
(Some stranger, rambling far astray
To find the lesson for the day;)
He tells us truths too plainly true,
And reads this service all askew—
Why, why the—mischief—can't he look
Beforehand in the service-book?

But thou, with decent mien and face,
Art always ready in the place;
Thy strenuous blast, whate'er the tune,
As steady as the strong monsoon;
Thy only groan, a leathery creak,
Or small residual extra squeak,
To send along the shadowy aisles
A sunlit wave of dimpled smiles.

Not all the preaching, O my friend!
Comes from the church's pulpit end,
Not all that bend the knee and bow
Yield service half so true as thou.
One simple task performed aright,
With slender skill, but all thy might,
Where honest labor does its best,
And leaves the player all the rest.

This many-diapasoned maze,
Through which the breath of being strays,
Whose music makes our earth divine,
Has work for mortal hands like mine.
My duty lies before me. Lo!
The lever there! Take hold and blow;
And He whose hand is on the keys
Will play the tune as He shall please.

A HASTY WORD.

"Harry," said I, to our little five-year old, "will you run and tell Bridget to have warm biscuits for tea?"

He started quickly, and as he started his foot caught in a little stand upon which I had placed a rare Parian vase, with a rosebud just unfolding its crimson petals in it. The stand fell over, and the vase (a gift from my mother) was shattered.

"You naughty boy," I cried, angrily, "you deserve to be whipped. Pick up those pieces instantly and put them in the coal hod." He stooped, carefully picked up the fragments, carried them away and was gone for some time. When he returned it was with something lightly clayed in his hand.

Coming to me he placed a five-cent piece in my hand, saying, timidly:

"Will that buy a new vase, mamma?"

What evil demon possessed me to take the coin, his sacredly cherished treasure a kind neighbor had given him, and throw it from me I know not.

Harry picked it up with tears running and sat down upon his stool with his hands folded so meekly. Presently he said:

"Mamma, may I go and play with Eddy Potter?"

"I don't care where you go," said I, crossly, "as long as you keep out of my sight."

Harry went to the closet where his coat and hat hung, put them on and came and stood by my side.

"Mamma, will you please forgive me? I'm so sorry," and he put up his lips for a kiss.

O! God forgive me. I pushed the little fellow away. He stood by the door a moment looking pitifully at me. It is twenty-five years ago to-day since he stood there; but I can see him, with his blue coat and red and gray worsted skating cap as the little feet went slowly down the stairs. I heard him go out and unfasten the gate. Looking out of the window I saw the little fellow lift his face with a smile as he saw me, which gave place to a pitiful quiver of the lips as he saw I took no notice of him. I watched the darling down the street with a strange undefined feeling, till the little coat and red mittens were no longer visible. Twice a sudden impulse moved me to call him back, but I crushed it down. Oh! would to God I had. Well, I sewed all through the winter afternoon. At four o'clock I put away my work and sat by the window. Conscience began to reproach me for my conduct. "I don't care," said I, "my beautiful vase is in ruins."

What is the value of all the vases in the world compared with your child? Have you not spoken crossly to that dear little Harry, who is always so cheerful and obedient? And this is not the first time, either; and you call yourself a Christian mother, too. Suppose Harry should be suddenly taken away from you, would not your cruel words haunt you forever?

I could bear this no longer. I rose and picked up the stray litter about the room to give it a more tidy appearance.

Then I went to the window, peering anxiously through the gloom, but seeing nothing of my boy, my heart became terribly heavy; this suspense was unbearable. Hastily throwing a shawl over my head, I ran into Mrs. Potter's.

"Have you seen Eddie?" was the question before I entered the room.

"Have you seen Harry?"

"He was over here at half-past two; he and Eddie went over to Josie Gray's I think——"

What she thought I never knew, for at that moment the door flew open and Eddie rushed in breathless, screaming—

"Oh! mother, mother! Harry Loring is drowned. We were sliding on the mill pond, and there was a hole in the ice with snow on it, and Harry didn't see it, and——"

"Hush, Eddie," said his mother, looking at me fearfully; "here is Mrs. Loring."

There was a great silence in the room, broken only by the blithe, sweet voice of a canary, and the purr of a Maltese cat. Presently Mrs. Potter came towards me, and placed her hand softly on my shoulder, saying, "Ella, my poor child."

But I never moved, but sat gazing with wide open eyes upon an awful picture. A cold gray afternoon, a pond, and a little figure well known to me suddenly disappearing through the treacherous ice, down, down, the little hand grasping at the treacherous weeds, the sweet mouth full of water. And those wicked, sinful words ringing through my ears:—"I don't care where you go, so long as you keep out of my sight." There was a mist before my eyes, a ringing in my ears. I remember leaving the house with a blind feeling of going where my Harry was. Then came a horrible sense of the earth breaking away at my feet, and I knew no more.

A pleasant feeling of warmth, a languid sense pervaded my whole system. I opened my eyes and glared around the room. A strange woman by the fire; at the foot of the bed my husband, with his hands over his eyes. I tried to think what had happened, but in vain. Then my attention was arrested by a little figure in a red flannel night dress cuddled up in a big chair—my Harry. Then it all flashed across my mind. I sat up straight in bed with a faint, "Why, what is it?

"You must not talk; lie down. Oh! darling!" and the strong man wept like a child. And the little figure came and jumped on my bed, and, putting his arms around my neck, cried too. And I, puzzled to know what it all meant, cried also. The strange figure came and took Harry away, saying:—

"Be careful now, Mr. Loring; everything depends upon quiet."

"Tell me all now," said I; "I don't know. I had such a horrible feeling. Oh, Harold, I dreamed Harry was drowned."

His face grew white.

"He was near death. George Gray got him out of the pond. Gray sent down to the office for me. I went after Dr. Hopper and came right up. There was but a spark of life, but we succeeded at last."

"How many days ago was it, Harold?" said I.

"Seven weeks ago, yesterday," said he smiling.

"Seven weeks!" said I. "Impossible!"

"You have been sick with the brain fever, Ella. You were very near death; for days we despaired of ever seeing you conscious. You would say, Harry is drowned, and I made him drown himself! Last night Dr. Hopper said, 'The crisis is at hand; if she lives through the night she will get well.' Oh, Ella! I am so thankful you are spared to me."

"I have been weak and sinful, Harold," said I, and then told him all, not keeping back anything.

He heard me through, stroking my hair in a gentle fashion. When I had finished he said:

"It has taught you a lesson, Ella, dear." And that was all.

I soon recovered. For a long time I could not bear Harry out of my sight.

It seemed as if I could not do half enough to atone for my wicked conduct. The thought makes me shudder now as if it had been that Harry had never come back to me, and that the last words he had heard from his mother's lips were so unkind. I have had three children since, and not one of them has ever received a cross or hasty word from me. Oftentimes my patience is severely tired, but one thought of that terrible death to which Harry came so near, drives the demon away.

Mothers, bear patiently with those little innocent ones. Are there not many whose eyes, resting upon this simple story, are filled with tears at the recollection of the unkind words, and even blows, to little children laid away forever, who would give all their worldly possessions, yes, years of their lives, to recall those hasty words which made their lips quiver pitifully, and the clear eyes dim with tears? Ah! you cannot have them back. They are gone, and your sin remains.

A Chapter on Women.

A woman, notwithstanding she is the best of listeners, knows her business, and it is a woman's business to please. I don't say that it is not her business to vote, but I do say that the woman who does not please is a false note in the harmonies of nature. She may not have youth, or beauty, or even manner, but she must have something in her voice or expression, or both, which it makes you feel better disposed toward your race to look at or listen to. She knows that as well as we do; and her first question after you have been talking your soul into her consciousness is, Did I please? A woman never forgets her sex. She would rather talk with a man than an angel, any day. Womanly women are very kindly critics, except to themselves, and now and then to their own sex. The less there is of sex about a woman, the more she is to be dreaded. But take a real woman at her best moment—well dressed enough to be pleased with herself, not so resplendent as to be a show and a sensation, with the varied outside influences that set vibrating the harmonic notes of her nature stirring in the air about her—and what has social life to compare with one of those vital interchanges of thought and feeling with her that make an hour memorable? What can equal her tact, her delicacy, her subtlety of apprehension, her quickness to feel the changes of temperature as the warm and cool currents of thought blow by turns? At one moment she is microscopically intellectual, critical, scrupulous in judgment as an analyst's balance, and the next as sympathetic as the open rose that sweetens the wind from whatever quarter it finds its way to her bosom. It is in the hospitable soul of a woman that a man forgets he is a stranger, and so becomes natural and truthful, at the same time that he is mesmerized by all those divine differences which make her a mystery and a bewilderment.
—*O. H. Holmes.*

FIVE PERSONS BURNED TO DEATH.—In New Scotland, Albany Co., N.Y., a two-story building, occupied by Mr. Volmer, his wife, and five children, Volmer's mother, and his wife's stepfather, took fire. Volmer, his wife, and one child were on the first floor, and escaped. All the others perished in the flames. A few days since the old gentleman, Mrs. Volmer's stepfather, went to Albany and drew out of a savings bank some $300 or $400 which he had kept on deposit, intending, it is said, to go to Wisconsin at an early day. When the fire reached the second story the old gentleman, in his anxiety to save his money, kept back the others in the room with him, and would not permit them to open the window and jump to the ground.

A SLEEPY LEGISLATOR.—Not long since a sleepy member of the lower branch of the legislature requested a fellow-member to wake him when a certain bill involving the interests of lumbermen came up. This agreed upon, the sleepy member was scon in the happy land of dreams. It so happened that a certain bill upon theft and perjury came up that day. So when the latter bill was fairly underway, the sleepy member was aroused. He rubbed his eyes arose and addressed the speaker: "Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words upon the bill, for the fact is, the most of the people up our way make their living by this trade." It is needless that his remarks were appreciated and highly applauded.
—*Springfield, (Ill.) Journal.*

A LOUD CALL.—A Texas editor proclaims that, had he a voice which could be heard from the Lakes to the Rio Grande, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, he would concentrate its whole volume upon the great City of Washington, and plead with the authorities there for a mail at least three times a week in the City of Gatesville.

THE shipright at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, struck for $2 50 per day recently, the day's work to consist of nine hours, and the employers consented.

A Childish Fancy.

Oh mother! see how pale and wet
The flowers on father's grave are lying!
It must be watching you has set
The little daisy-buds to crying!

Poor child? and do you think the earth
Sorrows because our hearts are aching?
Look, then, with what a careless mirth
That sunlight on his bed is breaking!

Yes, but you called the great blue air
God's home, to all His angels given;
And so perhaps the sunbeam there
Is father smiling up in heaven!

THE SPRIGS OF MYRTLE.

The banns were published three times from the pulpit, the clergyman was bespoke, and the bridal-dress made. The bridal trousseau was ready; it consisted of nothing costly or splendid, but every thread of it had passed the mother's fingers, first through the spinning-wheel, and then through the loom. Many hours had been spun up, and many thoughts been woven into the modest marriage portion.

The marriage day came, and the morning sun blazed on the windows of the widow's house. Everybody was up and doing. The old lady was already busy in the kitchen, the young girl sat at the window gazing anxiously but happily down the road whence her bridegroom was to come. The three little sisters lay wide awake in their little cots; they had hardly closed their eyes the whole night, thinking of the splendor which the day was to bring.

In the forenoon a young girl came down to the bride from the manor. It was the gardener's daughter, her dearest, friend. She had a darling little basket on her arm, which she half-opened with a roguish smile, which made the young girl cast down her eyes and blush. The tiny basket was filled with sprigs of myrtle, (of which the bridal wreath is made in Denmark). At noon the three little ones were seen standing on the little hillock at the end of the garden. They were dressed in their Sunday clothes, and kept watch to let their sister know when the mail coach should come in sight on the hill, or report the first blast of the conductor's horn. But they got tired of waiting, and one after the other would run back to the house to ask if he would not soon come.

"Yes," said their mother, "you won't have to wait long now." Still, they had to wait so long that they at last began to cry.

In the course of the afternoon a storm rose, the sky darkened, and the rain beat against the panes. The little ones had to stay in the house. "But why doesn't he come?" they inquired eagerly of their sister.

"I hope that nothing has happened to him," the young girl said, faintly, and turned her face against the wet pane in order that they should not perceive that her eyes were wet also.

At dusk a letter came to the widow. When she had read it she was crying too. It was a sorrowful time, and a dark night closed the day which should have been the marriage day, but was not. The mother, the young girl, and the three little sisters wept all of them together; but seventy years have passed away since that sad evening, and in these years we have lived through so many gloomy hours and sorrowful days that we cannot afford tears for all of them. Therefore we do not weep with those whose tears flowed so long ago.

Tears dry soon. The next day the young girl wept no more. She was seized with a fever. Wandering in her mind, she dreamed that she was a bride, and all her youthful friends brought her wreaths—she was so unspeakably happy. And the dream came to pass. Her illness increased, and eight days after she was dead. All her youthful friends brought her wreaths—garlands of box and winter-green.

Nor did the mother weep the next day. She tenderly consoled the little girls, but gave vent to her wrath at the world's wickedness, and the men's falseness, while talking about her great calamity to her neighbor's wife. The sprigs of myrtle she threw angrily out of the window.

The little sisters recovered soon from their disappointment. Each of them had received a large piece of the bride-cake, which they were contentedly eating sitting on the grass in the sunshine.

"Oh! look at the pretty, green things *there*," they cried, pointing at the discarded myrtle sprigs; "let us make a wreath of them," said one.

"No, let us plant them in the sand, and play at garden with them," said another.

"I say let us plant them regularly, plant them in flower-pots," proposed a third; and her proposition was agreed to.

The children procured a bottle with the neck broken off, an earthenware pitcher without a handle, and a cracked flower-pot, which they mended with twine; and in these three vessels each of the little girls planted their sprigs.

"Now, if we only have patience, they will grow up to be big trees, and bear beautiful flowers," said the little ones.

"Don't be too sure of that," said the neighbor's wife.

"Why shouldn't they bear flowers?" asked the children.

"Because there is no luck in these twigs. If you want that kind of plant to take root, you must plant it in a golden pot, and not in such poor potsherds as these."

The sprigs of myrtle were, however, more willing than the dame had thought; they took root and grew, all three of them.

* * * * *

Ten years, twelve years, more than twelve years passed away. The little cottage at the road was torn down, and a beautiful villa was built in its stead. It had a slate roof, veranda, espalier, colored panes in the doors, and geeen window-blinds; but the owner and his family let it stand empty in the winter, and during the summer they frequently traveled abroad.

But what had become of the widow and her children? The old lady had followed her daughter "yonder by the church wall, beneath the lilac bush," answered the neighbor's wife, when folks asked where they now lived. The three little girls had grown up; when inquired for, she could only tell that "they had all three left and gone out into the great wide world." Each had taken her myrtle with her.

The oldest of the girls was the handsomest; for that reason an old rich uncle had taken a fancy to her, and adopted her. He was in a good social position, and kept house on a grand scale, fully as grand as his means would allow; and he spared no expense in the education of his adopted daughter. She was taught to dance, and sing, and to play; had masters in French and English, and a maid to wait upon her. Her myrtle experienced a similar good fortune. It grew now in a golden pot, perhaps not of genuine gold, but still a gilded porcelain pot. It was watered each morning by her maid with rain water, and each evening by the young gentlemen with compliments. They all had something gallant to say about the flourishing myrtle.

And what had they not to say about the young girl? She was so very beautiful that they could not afford to think about her, and so they did not think any more about her than just for the time they saw her. But when they beheld her they sighed; the more charming she grew, the more they sighed, whereupon she again would try all her power of fascination to be still more bewitching. Her head was wreathed with glorious auburn locks, but to make herself still more enchanting, she decked them with garlands of flowers, the one more magnificent than the other. First she wore one of forget-me-nots, then of rosebuds, then of Provence roses, then dahlias, then poppies, and at last, grape-vines and leaves in all the gorgeous tints of autumn. And while the one wreath gave place to the other, the one year passed away after the other. At last she wore a wreath of pure gold leaves; but there were now silver lines in her beautiful tresses. She had not had time to attend to her myrtle. It had meanwhile pined away, withered, and died.

"That is the way with all of us," she sighed, glancing at the mirror. The myrtle was then thrown out into the yard among the rubbish. Some little boys found it; they coated the twigs with birdlime and caught sparrows on them. These were the flowers that the first sprig of myrtle grew to bear.

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The second of the widow's daughters was not exactly handsome, but a neat, pleasant little girl enough. Good-natured and yielding, she accepted cheerfully whatever lot might be in store for her. When her mother was dead she went to the house of her aunt, who was also a widow, and her myrtle she brought with her.

The aunt had a son, who was the apple of her eye, but that was, too, about all he was, and he never got to be anything else. From his mother he received food and clothing, light and warmth, a neat little room, and as much pocket-money as his doating mother could possibly spare him; in short, he got everything he wanted excepting his college degree, which he had to work for himself; that he found really too troublesome. When he became twenty-five years of age he wanted a sweetheart, and he got her too. Aunty assured the young girl that he was such an exceedingly nice young man and loved her so very much that it would be a shame to say to him no, and the girl would of course not have the burden of a refusal upon her conscience.

Consequently they were engaged, which was both nice and convenient. Now the old lady had both her darlings at home, and there was billing and cooing from morning till evening. His room was the only one which faced the sun, for which reason the myrtle was left there. Ah, how many sweet words were murmured and simpered over that myrtle by the young couple, and yet they never got tired of repeating what they had said so often before.

It is curious enough that myrtle cannot be made to flourish in a bachelor's apartment. Whether it is the heat from the close stove in winter, or the drought in summer, whether it is the tobacco smoke, or for what other reason, one thing is sure, that myrtles do not thrive very satisfactorily, particularly when they have to continue the struggle for half a score of years, like this poor myrtle.

There is a kind of disease called honey-dew, for the reason that all the leaves of a tree which it attacks become covered with a sweetish adhesive juice like honey or syrup. That disease now seized upon the myrtle of the engaged couple. The leaves got stuck together, and dust and dirt covered them. In time it became impossible to decide whether they were green or grey. It was a pitiful sight. The lovers finally did not know any more what they were to do with it, but then the old woman died, and they got something else to think of. They had to separate, and however hard it was to confess it, they were both convinced that it was for ever. No such an engagement could of course come to anything. He got a situation at a widow's—as her husband, in fact, after having been for a long time her business manager. She became housekeeper to a widower, and when he found out that she was clever and economical and pleasant to get along with, he concluded that he might as well marry her, an arrangement to which she had indeed no objection.

The myrtle was really too unfit to be used for a nuptial wreath, but the bridegroom said it didn't matter much, as he was but a widower, and the ceremony was to take place quietly at home.

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The third daughter was far from being handsome. That she had soft, clear and earnest eyes, a delicate complexion, and sound white teeth, everybody was willing to admit; but she had also a thick, rough, red head of hair, and a great abundance of freckles, and therefore everybody agreed to call her very homely, and when everybody once comes to such a conclusion, it remains an undisputed fact. Neither uncle nor aunt invited her to their homes; she went out amongst strangers after her mother's death.

She got a situation on the manor of a rich squire; that is, she was engaged to attend the lady as maid and seamstress, and to serve the squire and his steward as a target for their clumsy wit and jokes, not very choice, but a great many of them. Country air is wholesome and fresh. The young girl soon felt herself at home in her new place. There was more to hear and more to do than she had been used to, but a willing horse draws a heavy load, and what comes through one ear may pass out at the other, which two old sayings she laid to heart, and felt tolerably contented with her lot. Her myrtle had a good deal better time than she had. It was installed in a little turret-chamber, which went by the name of the maiden's bower. There it stood the livelong summer day on the sill of the open window, and looked down into the garden, rejoiced in the morning sun and evening dew, heard the songs of birds, received visits from bees and butterflies. No wonder that it throve and shot out twig after twig on all sides.

There were jovial times at the manor during the summer vacation. Strangers and acquaintances arrived from the capital, and among them a young student, the gayest of the gay. He teased the young girl a little too, but not exactly the same way as the others. He rather amused her.

One day he conceived the clever joke of stealing her myrtle and replacing it with a cactus. The door to the maiden's bower was of course locked, but the windows of the bower were conveniently open. He procured a long ladder from the garden, and raised it against the wall. He had already gained the topmost round with the cactus pot on his arm when the ladder slipped and he was precipitated to the ground. There he was lying with one leg broken and the ankle of the other sprained.

Even that was at the expense of the poor governess. In addition to her other multifarious duties, she had now to assume that of sick nurse also; but she performed that office with such care and assiduity, that the poor young man, lying crippled in a strange house, neither missed his home nor his sister's care. "If you are equally tender to the next who breaks his neck or leg, I propose to jump out of the window myself sometime next winter when I have leisure," said the steward.

"If I were you I wouldn't risk it," observed the saire. "Our charming governess has heart-plaster for no more than one wounded knight." The steward laughed, as in duty bound, at this clever remark of his superior. The witty remark of the squire was, however, not entirely without its little grain of truth.

As a real sister of mercy, her heart bled for every suffering being, and the young man suffered very much; but it is there fore not impossible that he obtained something more than a brother's share of her heart; but if so, it remained a secret. When he began to recover, and assured her every day how much he had to thank her for, she felt so happy that she scarcely dared to confess it to herself, and each time she looked at her myrtle she was conscious of a strange but delicious feeling. It was the myrtle which had been the cause of the disaster, and she chose to consider it as the cause of her own happiness. At last, having fully recovered, he left the manor and returned to the city. He was to read for his examination degree. The place was very lonely after he was gone, but he had left many pleasant memories behind him.

When the governess was sitting alone in her little turret-chamber and a butterfly would come in through the window, flutter about amongst the twigs of her myrtle, and then sail out again, it would always remind her of the student. He had suggested so much in looks and tone of his voice, to which he seemed to be afraid of giving utterance, that thoughts would visit the governess which she likewise shrank from following to their logical conclusion.

Each time the squire returned home from a visit in the town, he seldom failed to bring the governess a kind remembrance from her patient, the student adding—"I say nothing, for I have no permission to say what I might say, but I know what I know;" and each time he delivered himself of this sententious remark, a blush would mantle the young girl's freckled cheeks.

A couple of years had gone. The student had prospered in the career he had chosen, and had already become a professor. During the summer vacation he intended to pay a visit to his old friend in the manor.

"It is not for my sake, I am sure, that he comes," said the steward.

"Nor for mine, I believe," remarked the squire. "He has now a position in the world. It must be you that he has waited for, my dear governess. If I were you I would let him take the myrtle in the usual way. It would be a pity if he should kill himself for the second time in trying to get at it through the window," insinuated the squire.

It was such a capital joke that they both burst out laughing. The young professor made his appearance in due time. The young girl sat in her turret-chamber, and gazed wistfully on the high road. Far away she descried the diligence and the red-coated postillion. A strange, half-defined remembrance from her childhood flashed through her thoughts. She did not exchange very many words with him the first evening, but still enough to cause her to sleep but little that night. Next evening a little ball was improvised. Some friends, and among them the sister of the squire's lady, an acknowledged belle from the capital had arrived in the course of the day. As a reigning ball queen, and near relation to the lady of the manor, the professor deemed it his duty to open the ball with her. He wished to dance the second dance with the governess, but she did not dance; he waltzed again with the beautiful lady from town. That night the governess slept still less.

Some time after she was sitting again alone one evening in her turret-bower. It was a lovely moonlight. Ladies and gentlemen were sauntering about in the garden enjoying the balmy evening. The sound of gay laughter and many voices rose up to her, but his voice she could not distinguish among the others. Presently she became aware of a whispering immediately below her at the foot of the tower. A young couple had separated from the rest of the company; it was the professor and the lovely city lady. What they whispered about—alas! that the poor governess understood but too well. That night she did not sleep at all.

In the fall of the same year a grand marriage took place in the old manor. A lovlier bride than the professor's bride never been seen before. The governess had made the bridal wreath; of her myrtle nothing but the stems and stalks remained; the bride wore all the green part in her hair, as she stood before the altar. It was indeed a rosy wreath—it sparkled as if it were full of diamonds.

One year followed after the other, and the one just like the other. The myrtle did not perish for all the many cuttings it had suffered; next spring it shot forth a host of light green leaflets, and in due time it expanded into a glorious verdant crown, richer and more vigorous than ever before. But it was now a myrtle in its best years—beyond the forties.

The owner herself was not far from fifty. It is not considered a girl's best age, but it really seems that our poor governess' best age was now to commence. Her red hair turned grey, the freckles disappeared, but her soft mild eyes remained unchanged. Everybody agreed now that she was a remarkably handsome old maid.

One day a letter with a black seal came to the manor. It was addressed to the old maid from the professor. His wife was dead, himself not well, and his happy little ones needed womanly love and care—he appealed to her goodness in this his great grief and trouble. Her mind was made up at once as to what was to be done. She resigned her position, and prepared to leave the old house, which had sheltered her for so long. There was real grief in the manor the day she left. Neither the squire nor his steward could find anything witty or smart to say as they accompanied her to the carriage in which her great myrtle was already towering up on the back seat.

In the professor's house she was received by seven little girls in black.

"What is that beautiful tree you have brought with you?" inquired the youngest.

"It is your mother's myrtle," she said, stooping down to kiss the little one. Time went on, and the little ones grew up to be young ladies.

And now it appeared that there was good luck with the old myrtle after all.

Each of the girls wore a wreath from their mother's myrtle, and the old maid made them all.

When she in her youthful days cut sprigs for the first wreath, she believed that it never would bear green leaves again; now she cut one crop of green sprigs after the other, and the plant flourished ever afresh and with renewed vigor. It seemed to her that her happiness grew more and more each time.

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Near the eastern rampart of the city lies a row of low, bright little houses, mostly inhabited by old people and lonely families; in most of the windows you will notice a good many flowering plants in pots, and canary birds in gay cages. In one of these little houses, through whose centre window a splendid myrtle is plainly visible, lives an old maid of near eighty years of age. She resides there alone, but it is a rare thing to pass her house without seeing the faces of young girls and the golden heads of young children peeping through the bright panes. They are the professor's grandchildren, who come to see the old lady and the famous tree, which has borne their mother's and grandmother's bridal wreaths, and still bears plenty of sprigs for their own.

Not long ago I went past that place. Outside it was bitter cold; it froze hard, but summer reigned in the room within. I heard the songs of the birds and the happy laughter of young children. I caught a glimpse of the old lady sitting behind her myrtle, through the network of whose shining leaves her snow-white hair was visible—just as if the old tree was in full blossom.

The Bastinado.

I saw a man bastinadoed in Turkey. I had heard much of this, a punishment existing only in the East, but I had never seen it inflicted before, and I fervently hope I never shall see it again. I found the little Governor standing at one end of the large hall of entrance, munching, and trying cases. A crowd was gathered around, and before him was a poor Arab, pleading and beseeching most piteously, while the big tears were rolling down his cheeks. Near him was a man whose resolute and somewhat angry expression marked him as the accuser, seeking vengeance rather than justice.

Suddenly the Governor made a gentle movement with his hand; all noise ceased; all stretched their necks and turned their eager eyes toward him; the accused cut short his crying, and stood with his mouth wide open, and his eyes fixed upon the Governor. The latter spoke a few words in a very low voice, of course unintelligible to me, and indeed scarcely audible; but they seemed to fall upon the quick ears of the culprit like bolts of thunder. The agony of suspense was over, and without a word or a look, he laid himself down on his face at the feet of the Governor. A space was immediately cleared around; a man on each side took him by the hand, and stretching out his arms, kneeled upon and held them down, while another seated himself across his neck and shoulders. Thus nailed to the ground, the poor fellow, knowing now that there was no possible chance of escape, threw up his feet from the knee joint, so as to present the soles in a horizontal position. Two men came forward with a pair of long, stout bars of wood, attached together by a cord, between which they placed the feet, drawing them together with the cord, to fix them in their horizontal position, and leave the whole flat surface exposed to the full force of the blow. In the meantime, two strong Turks were standing ready, one at each side, armed with long whips, much resembling our own common cow skin, but longer and thicker, and made of the tough hide of the hippopotamus.

My sensibilities are not particularly acute, but they yielded in this instance. I had watched all the preliminary arrangements, nerving myself for what was to come; but when I heard the scourge whizzing through the air, and when the first blow fell upon the naked feet, saw the convulsive movements of the body, and heard the first loud, piercing shriek, I could stand it no longer; I broke through the crowd, forgetting everything except the agonizing sounds from which I was escaping; but the Janizary followed close at my heels, and, laying his hand upon my arm, hauled me back to be a witness of the administration of Turkish justice. If I had consulted merely the impulse of feeling, I should have consigned him and the Governor and the whole nation of Turks to the lower regions. But it was all important not to offend this summary disposer of justice; and I never made a greater sacrifice of feeling to expediency than when I reentered his presence. The shrieks of the unhappy criminal were ringing through the chamber, but the Governor received me with as calm a smile as if he had been sitting on his own divan, listening only to the strains of some pleasant music, while I stood with my teeth clenched and felt the hot breath of the victim and heard the whizzing of the accursed whip as it fell again and again upon his bleeding feet. I have heard men cry out in agony—when the sea was raging, and the drowning man for the last time, upon the mountain waves, turned his imploring look toward us and, with his dying breath, called in vain for help—but I never heard such heart-rending sounds as those from the poor bastinadoed wretch before me.

The poor scourged wretch was silent. He had found relief in happy insensibility. I cast one look upon the senseless body, and saw the feet laid open in gashes, and the blood streaming down the legs. At that moment the bars were taken away, and the mangled feet fell like lead upon the floor. I had to work my way through the crowd, and before I could escape, I saw the poor fellow revive, and, by the first natural impulse, rise upon his feet, but fall again, as if he had stepped upon red hot irons. He crawled upon his hands and knees to the door of the hall, and here I rejoiced to see that—miserable, and poor, and degraded as he was—he yet had friends whose hearts yearned toward him. They took him in their arms, and carried him away.

Such is the bastinado. And of the intensness of the agony which its infliction produces, one has only to think of the congeries or plexus of delicate nerves which have their terminus in the feet. Even "tickling" the soles of the feet has often produced death; what then must be the excruciating pain when cruel violence is done to those most sensitive members?—*Foreign Correspondence.*

COMPARATIVE PRICES.—Eleven years ago says a New York paper, a good article of flour was sold for $5.20 per barrel [at wholesale]. The highest price reached for the same brand was in 1867, when it sold for $10.70. In 1870 the same brand was worth only $4.90. In 1861, yellow corn was worth 67 cents per bushel; in 1867, $1.40; in 1872, 74 cents. Anthracite coal in 1861, by the cargo, $4.75 per ton. It reached its highest point in 1865, selling for $10; and now sells for $4.25, delivered on board vessels, say at Elizabethport, N. J. In 1861, middling upland cotton was worth 13½ cents per pound; in 1864, 83 cents; in 1870, 23½ cents; to-day, 22½ cents. New Orleans molasses, which sells to-day for 70 cents per gallon, was worth 32 cents in 1861, and $1.40 in 1865. Mess pork is $4.12 cheaper per barrel now than it was eleven years ago; good butter costs twice as much as then, and sugar just double; teas from 5 to 35 cents more per pound, depending upon the kinds. In 1861 common wool was quoted at 32 cents per pound, and 70 cents in 1864; the price is the same now, the lowest figures reached in the intervening period, being 44 cents in 1870. Pulling No. 1 wool was worth 22 cents in 1861; it is now quoted at 93 cents; a year ago it was 38 cents.

A QUESTION FOR PHYSICIANS.—Judge Ball, who is collecting facts for a history of Hoosick Falls, furnishes the following: "In the year 1799 several cases of small-pox occurred in the town, and a dwelling near the village of Hoosick Falls was used as a pest-house. Seventy years afterwards the house (having been occupied all that time as a dwelling, with no case of small-pox or other unusual sickness) was repaired. One of the workmen employed on the repairs was taken down with a disease which proved to be malignant small-pox, to which he had not been otherwise exposed than by working on this old pest-house." If small-pox virus can be retained for seventy years in the walls, floors, ceiling or furniture of a dwelling house, greater care and more stringent measures will be necessary to insure protection from this loathsome disease.—*Troy Press.*

THE weather in California is very warm, and grain is maturing rapidly. The late rains have repaired damage to the vineyards caused by the frost, and the vintage this year will be larger than that of last year.

BOSTON requires 1,000,000 tons of coal per annum, or 4,000 cargoes, an average of 20 per day, from April to October.

The Generation of Petroleum.

The recent development of the reproductive power of petroleum wells that had been for some years abandoned because they were believed to be exhausted, is not alone a matter of value to the owners of the territory that was until lately presumed to be incapable of further production, but it affords a more trustworthy basis than any the world has hitherto been able to obtain for forming an approximately correct opinion concerning the chemical process whereby petroleum is generated. Until within a few days, a popular opinion prevailed that petroleum, in spite of its name, was the product of coal; and so nearly was this idea general among a majority of people, that many foreign receivers of petroleum are still accustomed to order it as "coal oil." The belief, however, that the terrene oil of Pennsylvania and Canada is exclusively a product of bituminous coal may now safely be pronounced to be an error. There is certainly no evidence that coal is not one of the substances from which petroleum is distilled; but, at the same time, it is a somewhat strange fact, allowing a proper degree of credit to the belief that coal does not enter into the composition of petroleum, that no coal beds susceptible of being worked are known to exist within fifty miles of the oil-producing territory. Again, it is a manifest and recognized fact that carbon does predominate as an integral essence of petroleum; and the other fact that the oil territory of Pennsylvania is surrounded by beds of bituminous coal, renders it eminently reasonable to believe that coal enters largely—if not, indeed, more largely than any other substance—into the process of distillation whereby petroleum is produced.

Petroleum is certainly a mineral oil. But whatever may be the number and chemical variety of the minerals from which it is formed, the distillation of it is more intimately associated with limestone than with any other mineral. Sandstone is also found in boring oil wells, but it is from the pores of limestone that, in the chemical process of extracting oil from the minerals found in connection with its production, the greatest quantity of petroleum is taken. It is singular that, in boring for oil, no coal has ever been found, even in the smallest quantities, while sand, stone and limestone abound. The inference, therefore, cannot be escaped that petroleum is the product of the distillation of at least two, and probably of more than three, distinct mineral properties. In the process of manufacturing refined oil, the crude article yields three different products—naphtha, kerosene and residuum, a fact which certainly supports the belief that crude oil is the product of three different minerals. So far as concerns the contribution by coal of an integer in the chemical process by which petroleum is produced in and from certain geological strata, it may be remarked that the "shale" oil produced from bituminous coal in England is very different from American petroleum; in that the American naphtha must be used in order that the latter may be burned in lamps. Another fact that favors the inference that petroleum is mainly produced from or generated through limestone, is that petroleum has been extracted from limestone found in the neighborhoods of Chicago and of Terre Haute, Ind. In regard to the reproductive powers recently developed in the Pennsylvania territory believed to have been exhausted, it affords two favorable presumptions: First, as a partial assurance that the distillation of petroleum is a continuous process; and next, that the formerly abandoned territory was given up because the machinery for extracting petroleum from the earth exceeded in its power of exhausting the fluid the generative powers by which it is produced.—*Petroleum Monthly.*

A Clerical Joker.

The late Elder John Smith, of Kentucky, who died recently at an advanced age, was one of the most eccentric wits South of the Ohio River. He was familiarly known throughout Kentucky as "Raccoon Smith." While still in the Baptist ministry, and attending one of the annual meetings of that body, a tall, lank, green specimen of humanity presented himself before the Association as a candidate for the ministry. He was not regarded as being of entirely sound mind, and labored under the hallucination that he was especially "called to preach," and kept constantly importuning the Association to grant him the necessary license. In addition to his particularly unbalanced mind, young Meeks was the possessor of as huge and ungainly a pair of feet as ever trod shoe-leather. Tired of his importunities, and not being disposed to grant the license, the Association handed him over to Smith, with instructions to make an end of the case, and between them took place the following conversation:

Smith—So, Brother Meeks, you think you have a special call to preach?

Meeks—Yes, the Lord has called me to the work, but the Association refuses me the license.

Smith—How do you know you are called?

Meeks—Know it! I feel it in my heart of hearts. I want my license.

Smith—Do you believe the Bible, Brother Meeks?

Meeks—Certainly I do—every word of it.

Smith—If I can prove by the Bible that you are not called to preach, will you be satisfied to drop the matter, and not further importune the Association for a license?

Brother Meeks assented to this,